CLASS OUTLINE
DYNAMICS OF OPPRESSION
METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH OF THE RESURRECTION
SEPTEMBER 18 THRU OCTOBER 9, 1990

WEEK I -- September 18, 1990

I. Introduction

A. Course Objective
B. Process

II. Exercise "I AM"

III. Videotape: "Before Stonewall"

IV. Discussion

WEEK II -- September 25, 1990

I. Racism

II. Sexism

III. Homophobia

IV. Heterosexism

WEEK III -- October 2, 1990

I. Videotape: "Tongues Untied"

II. Discussion

WEEK IV -- October 9, 1990

I. "Into Action"

II. Closure

THE DEPARTMENT OF PEOPLE OF COLOR

The Department of People of Color in UFMCC is a program of UFMCC. We are a network of people who come together to worship God, to discover healing in our journey toward wholeness through workshops and seminars and to do the business of the Department.

WHY DOES UFMCC NEED THIS DEPARTMENT?

Too many people still ask, "Why does this Department exist?" or "Why do people of color have to separate from whites in meetings and conferences?" To ask questions like these is to ignore the devastating effects of oppression. We all know that as we are alienated and excluded from the whole, the first healthy instinct is to seek out and bond with others who are also excluded. This has been true of women, differently-abled, people with AIDS, gay and lesbians and people of color. We form mutually supportive systems of people who can relate to our pain and our joy in order to effect healing and to repair our self-esteem. At most, if not all District Conferences, clergy, student clergy, deacons, and laity have meetings to discuss problems and praises particular to themselves in order to better serve the whole. people of color in UFMCC are no different -- we also need mutually supportive systems to promote our healing and to guide us in our journey toward wholeness.

The Department of Third World Ministries laid the foundation for us to rename ourselves -- People of Color in UFMCC. Now we claim our place of honor within the denomination that dared to claim for all of us our rightful place of honor in the Body of Christ. We are a visible and effective presence calling out to all of those marginalized within the marginalized saying, "You can find respect, healing and the love of God here!"

Our gifts are many, our God-given power and potential for healing is absolutely essential to the health and wholeness of UFMCC in the world.

Studies Discover Clues to the Roots Of Homophobia

By DANIEL GOLEMAN

Gay men and women in America face a hatred that is often more intense, open and intractable than that directed at any other minority group, researchers are finding.

Although polls show more Americans are beginning to accept homosexual men and women and support their rights, there has been a great increase in reports of anti-homosexual bias since the beginning of the AIDS epidemic. But AIDS has not created the new hostility, researchers have found. Instead, the disease has given bigots an excuse to act out their hatred.

In studying the virulence and tenacity of anti-gay feelings, psychologists are finding clues to the deeper sources of homophobia. The new findings confirm the theory that some men use hostility and violence to homosexuals to reassure themselves about their own sexuality. But the greatest portion of anti-homosexual bias, psychologists now say, arises from a combination of fear and self-righteousness in which homosexuals are preceived as contemptible threats to the moral universe.

Such attitudes are supported, researchers say, by the fact that unlike any other minority group, homosexuals still find themselves the target of institutionalized bias. They are barred from the armed services, and in many states sodomy laws make their sexual activities illegal. Until 1980, the official psychiatric diagnostic manual listed homosexuality as a mental disorder.

"It's as though our very existence is somehow a threat," said Naomi Lichtenstein, a social worker at the New York City Gay and Lesbian Anti-Violence Project who counsels victims of attacks.

One of the most troubling findings for those trying to combat anti-gay bias is data showing the hostility is far more accepted among large numbers of Americans than is bias against other groups. In surveys, about three-quarters of homosexuals say they have been harassed by people calling them names, and as many as one in four say they have been physically assaulted.

"Anti-gay violence is still acceptable because, while leaders decry racial and religious bigotry, they ignore violence against gays and lesbians," said Matt Foreman, executive director of the New York City Gay and Lesbian Anti-Violence Project.

A 1988 study done by the State of New York for the Governor's Task Force on Bias-Related Violence concluded that of all groups, "the most severe hostilities are directed at lesbians and gay men."

In "one of the most alarming findings" the report found was that while teenagers surveyed were reluctant to advocate open bias against racial and ethnic groups, they were emphatic about disliking homosexual men and women. They are perceived "as legitimate targets which can be openly attacked," the report said.

In a survey of 2,823 students from eighth to 12th grade, three-quarters of boys and half the girls said it would be bad to have a homosexual neighbor. The feelings were as strong among 12-year-olds as among 17-year-olds. What's more, many students added gratuitous vicious comments about homosexuals; that was not the case regarding other groups.

Scientists who study attitudes toward homosexuals say the largest group among people who are biased

> Homosexuals are perceived as threats to the moral universe.

are those for whom homosexuals "stand as a proxy for all that is evil," said Dr. Gregory Herek, a psychologist at the University of California at Davis.

"Such people see hating gay men and lesbians as a litmus test for being a moral person," said Dr. Herek, who has done extensive research on attitudes toward homosexuals. Often they act out of adherence to religious orthodoxy in faiths that hold homosexuality is a sin.

Thus Dr. Herek does not see AIDS as having increased anti-gay feelings as much as offering "a convenient hook on which they can hang their pre-existing prejudices."

The affirmation of one's own values through anti-gay sentiment, his research has found, is the most common motive. For instance, in a study of attitudes toward homosexuals in 248 college students, Dr. Herek found this was the source of hostility in just over half those who held an anti-gay bias.

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New Studies Discover Clues to the Roots of Homophobia

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Bob Altemeyer, a psychologist at the University of Manitoba who has developed a scale measuring attitudes toward homosexuals, has found that those with the most intense hostility have an extreme fear that the world is an unsafe place and that society is at risk and a self-righteousness that leads them to judge those who hold different values as morally inferior.

"They see homosexuality as a sign that society is disintegrating, and as a threat to their sense of morality," said Dr. Altemeyer. "Their self-righteousness makes them feel they are acting morally when they attack homosexuals. It overcomes the normal inhibitions against aggression."

Dr. Altemeyer tells his students that he is gay. "For most, over the course of the year it makes their attitudes toward gays more positive," he said. "But if their hostility toward gays is based on religion, their views are hardest to change."

Once a person has a bias against homosexuals, it is difficult to change, Dr. Herek said, "even when reality contradicts it."

"Thus the stereotypes of gay men as feminine and lesbians as masculine persists in people's minds," he said, "even though most gay men and lesbians do not, in fact, conform to those images."

In an article to be published later this year in "Homosexuality: Social, Psychological and Biological Issues" (Sage Publishers), Dr. Herek reviewed a case in point: the tenacity of the belief that homosexuals should not be teachers because they might sexually molest children.

Citing studies showing that child molesters are overwhelmingly heterosexual or simply fixated on children, not homosexual, Dr. Herek notes that despite the facts, many people continue to believe that gay men are child molestors.

"Once parents perceive a threat to their children," Dr. Herek said, "their emotionality makes them prone to simplistic thinking. It is such emotionality that makes anti-gay stereotypes so hard to change."

In a classic study of stereotpying, Mark Snyder, a psychologist at the University of Minnesota, gave people a description of the life history of a woman named "Betty K." After reading the history, some were told that Betty later had a lesbian relationship and lived with her female lover. Others were told that Betty married a man.

"It made a dramatic difference in how people remembered and interpreted her life," said Dr. Snyder. "Their memories focused on bits of evidence that supported the stereotypes," such as her not having a steady boyfriend in high school by those who were told she had a lesbian relationship.

While there was nothing negative in what people remembered, Dr. Snyder found that people selected facts that supported stereotypes about lesbians and ignored those that might contradict them. That normal tendency, he said, can build into a bias.

Selective Memory

"If your attitude is negative, it snowballs, and you only notice and remember facts that are negative, until it becomes a full-blown prejudice," said Dr. Snyder. "And you tend to assume everyone feels as you do. As you become more convinced, you are more likely to take the next step and put your beliefs into actions like outright discrimination or violence, whether it's against blacks or gays."

Defensiveness about their own sexuality is another common source of people's hostility toward homosexuals. In Dr. Herek's research, for instance, this was the second most common motive, accounting for about 40 percent of those hostile to homosexuals.

This explanation for homophobia is the oldest, dating back at least to a 1914 essay by Sandor Ferenczi, one of Freud's original followers who proposed that feelings of disgust toward gay men by heterosexual men are defensive, a reaction against their own similar attraction to other men. That view stems from Freud's theory that all people are originally bisexual in early childhood, and repress their attraction to the same sex as they grow.

> AIDS offers a convenient hook on which to hang pre-existing prejudices.

"Homophobia has much to do with the stereotypic perception of gays as feminine: the more feminine a gay man appears, the more hostility he evokes in other men," said Dr. Richard Isay, a psychiatrist at Cornell Medical College and author of "Being Homosexual."

Dr. Peggy Hanley-Hackenbruck, a psychiatrist at Oregon Health Services University and president of the Association of Gay and Lesbian Psychiatrists, said, "In insecure heterosexual women, a lesbian can arouse fears of their own latent homosexu[illegible] feelings, and so provoke hostility."

But Dr. Isay said, "Seeing a feminine man evokes a tremendous amount of anxiety in many men; it triggers an awareness of their own feminine qualities, such as passivity or sensitivity, which they see as being a sign of weakness. Women, of course, don't fear their femininity. That's partly why men are more homophobic than women, and why those biases are so strong in groups where men are selected for their masculine qualities, such as the army or sports." Other psychoanalysts see the expression of bias by men as being a way to reassure themselves that they are not homosexual.

"By hating gays, they can reassure themselves they are not gay," said Dr. Jennifer Jones, a psychologist at the Sexuality Research Program at the State University of New York at Albany, especially if they harbor doubts about their sexual orientation.

Both factors can be at play. "In gangs of teen-age boys who go out looking for gays to attack, the gay symbolizes an outsider," said Dr. Herek. "The attack solidifies the attackers' membership in their group, and affirms their shared values. But it's also crucial that it is their sexuality that defines homosexuals as outsiders. If you feel insecure about your own sexuality, as so many adolescents do, you can reassure yourself by attacking gays."

A Steady Rise in Violence

An exact accounting of such violence against gays is difficult, since many victims are reluctant to contact the police. But there were three times more attacks against gays reported to the New York Police Department Bias Crime Unit in the first half of 1990 as against the same period the year before.

In 1989, slightly more than 7,000 incidents of violence and harassment were reported against gay men and lesbians in the United States, including 62 bias-motivated murders, according to a report released last month by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. The figures through the 1980's show a steady rise, peaking in 1988 and remaining at about the same level in 1989.

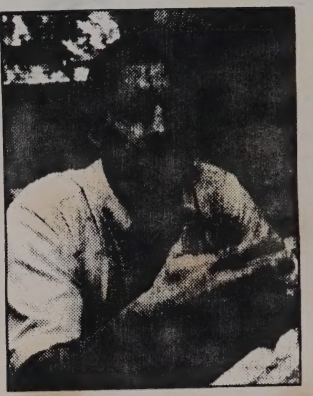
While most racial attacks are matters of turf in which people are attacked when they enter into another group's neighborhood, that is not so with homosexuals. Those who attack gays more often travel to a gay neighborhood to attack, Ms. Lichtenstein said.

The most frequent pattern of attack, according to Ms. Lichtenstein, is against a lone man or two men walking together. "A group of young men will cruise by in a car," she said. "Then the car screeches to a halt, they jump out and attack, kicking and punching, then jump back in and speed off."

As with other bias crimes, the most frequent attackers are young men 21 or under who act in groups, according to a study of 331 incidents, to be published in an article by Kevin T. Berrill, director of the anti-violence project of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, in the September issue of the Journal of Interpersonal Violence.

"The attacks are intended to drive us back to the invisibility and isolation of the closet," Mr. Berrill said.

"Coming out" is one of the most powerful strategies for attacking anti-gay prejudice, Dr. Herek said. This approach is particularly effective on those whose anti-gay attitudes are based on a negative stereotype that has never been challenged by so-



Terrence McCarthy for The New York Times

Dr. Gregory Herek, a California psychologist, says some anti-gay bias has religious roots.

cializing with someone who is gay. Paradoxically, that approach may also lead to a rise in anti-gay incidents, gay rights leaders say.

"Although the data might suggest that intolerance is gaining ground, I believe the opposite is true," Mr. Berrill said. "In the years to come, I think that lesbian and gay people will experience both increased acceptance and increased violence."

Mr. Berrill added, "I don't think it is a coincidence that San Francisco, one of the most accepting and hospitable cities in the country for lesbians and gay men, documents the highest number of anti-gay assaults year after year. The good news is that by becoming more visible and vocal we are shattering oppressive stereotypes and replacing them with positive, authentic representations of our lives. The bad news is that we are becoming a more visible target for the bigots and bashers in our midst."

Black Church and Political Praxis

Cornel West

The decision of The Rev. Jesse Jackson to seek the Presidency of the United States has raised once again the vitality of the Black Church in the political process. Given the historical roots of Afro-American Christianity, the spirituality and political praxis of the Black Church have represented a certain unity of purpose that is now being organized into the Jackson machine.

Cornel West looks at this prophetic role of the Black Church, both in historical terms as well as the challenges facing it today given the pressures of industrialization and urbanization. Can the Black Church maintain its prophetic role as it seeks to deepen its social analysis within the context of expanding economic depression in Black America?

Cornel articulates some of the issues raised by the Jackson campaign and the questions this campaign raises for those seeking to build political movements linked to the visions and aspirations of the poor and exploited.

The powerful forces of urbanization and industrialization notwithstanding, the vast majority of Afro-Americans remain religious. While the significant, though marginal, presence of Islam cannot be discounted, this religious hold over black people essentially takes the form of an evangelical Protestant Christianity.

Like all religious ideologies, this Protestant Christianity is politically ambiguous; that is, it possesses a conservative priestly pole and a progressive prophetic pole. Yet the distinctive feature of Afro-American Christianity has been its capacity to make visible and potent its progressive prophetic pole. Nat Turner, Denmark Vesey and Gabriel Prosser--Christian preachers who led slave insurrections

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Cornel West, Assistant Professor of Theology at Yale Divinity School, has been involved in the Black Church and Black Theology for a number of years. The article reproduced here first appeared in LE MONDE, November, 1983. English translation used with the permission of the author. Dr. West is also a member of the New York CIRCUS National Advisory Council.

in the 19th century--signify in dramatic fashion the crucial role of the Black Church in the Afro-American struggle for freedom.

In stark contrast with other Africans in the Western Hemisphere, black people in the USA have had relative control over their churches, thereby facilitating a creative fusion of religious transcendence and political opposition, belief in God and liberation themes, faith in the ultimate trustworthiness of human existence and negation of the racism in the prevailing social order. In short, the African appropriation of Christianity under conditions of slavery in the USA, the land of freedom and opportunity in the eyes of many, produced a unique version of Christianity with strong prophetic tendencies.

This Afro-American Christianity serves as the major resource from which black people draw strength and sustenance in their encounter with the modern American capitalist order--as urban dwellers, industrial workers, bureaucratic employees and franchised citizens. It is no accident that even this modern status results, in part, from the political struggles waged by the civil rights movement led by the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., which drew its cultural potency from the Black Church. Even the major religious rival of Afro-American Christianity, Islam, was promoted by a former black Christian preacher turned Muslim, the late Honourable Elijah Muhammad, and Malcolm X, the son of a black Christian minister.

The prophetic tradition of the Black Church is worth taking seriously not simply because of its important role in the black freedom movement, but also because it may highlight some of the cultural problems now besetting the left in the modern West. The inability of the left, especially in the USA, to deal adequately with the crucial issues of everyday life such as racism, sexism, ecology, sexual orientation and personal despair may indeed have something to do with its refusal to grapple with the complex role and function of religion. Needless to say, since the majority of people in the USA remain religious in some form or other, the American left (black or white) ignores religious and cultural issues at its own peril.

PEOPLE'S HISTORY
March 7, 1965
We Shall Overcome
Civil Rights march from Selma, Alabama led by Martin Luther King, Jr.
LIBERATION NEWS SERVICE

Yet the question of whether the Black Church can meet the challenges of the prevailing crisis in black America continues to haunt prophetic black religious leaders. And, despite the expansion of the scope of black elites in the past few decades, black religious leaders remain the most important leaders in black America. Rev. Theodore Jemison's moderate National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc. (the largest black organization in the USA), Rev. Benjamin Hooks' liberal National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Rev. Joseph Lowery's left-liberal Southern Christian Leadership Conference (founded by the late Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.), Rev. Herbert Daughtry's leftist National Black United Front and African People's Christian Organization, and Rev. Jesse Jackson's People United to Serve Humanity exemplify the religious hegemony of black leadership in the USA.

The crisis in black America is threefold. First, the black community is undergoing profound economic crisis

which most visibly takes the form of unprecedented unemployment, pervasive layoffs and severe cutbacks. Second, Afro-Americans are facing a political crisis that demands redefining relations to the Democratic Party. Third, black people are experiencing a pervasive spiritual crisis as the quotient of black distrust of one another escalates and black suicides and homicides proliferate. In short, black America is at the crossroads.

The economic crisis in black America results primarily from the international crisis of the world capitalist order. The Reagan program of reconstituting global capitalism, supported by repressive cultural sensibilities and anti-democratic restructuring, has one basic domestic thrust: vicious attacks and assaults on the fragile gains of working and poor peoples. These attacks and assaults are disproportionately targeted at peoples of color, especially black women (who head over one-half of black households) and black children. And as de-industrialization proceeds in the Northeast and Midwest, black industrial workers inordinately suffer.

The political crisis in black America is manifest in captivity to the Democratic Party. The refusal of most black politicians to explore new forms of political empowerment outside the Democratic Party has produced paralysis and powerlessness among actual and potential black voters. The election of Harold Washington as mayor of Chicago revealed the limitations of relying on the Democratic Party and the strengths of community mobilizing and organizing; his election is unimaginable without the support of the black churches in Chicago. The possible candidacy of Rev. Jesse Jackson in presidential primaries may point in a similar direction if he is willing to challenge seriously the Democratic Party. With the election of Washington, the [candidacy] of Mel Kind in Boston, and the vast voter registration drives of Rev. Hooks' NAACP, Rev. Jackson's PUSH and Rev. Jemison's vast church network, political momentum may be gaining for such a challenge.

The spiritual crisis in black America flows from new class and strata divisions, the impact of mass culture and the invasion of drugs in the black communities throughout the country. The slow but sure class polarization between the growing black petite bourgeoisie and the increasing black underclass creates immense problems of black communication. These problems have spiritual consequences in that black distrust and disrespect produce widespread frustration and cynicism among black people. The impact of mass culture, especially radio and television, has diminished the influence of the Black Church. Among large numbers of black youth, it is black music which serves as the central influence for the shaping of their psyches. Since little of this music is spiritually inspiring, black people have fewer and fewer spiritual resources to fall back on in periods of crisis. With the invasion of drugs in the black community--with police indifference and political silence on behalf of the white power structure--a new subculture among black youth has emerged which thrives on criminal behavior and survives on hopelessness. Hence, prison life has become an integral component of black working class and underclass life.

There have been four basic responses to these crises by the Black Church. First, there is the conservative alternative put forward by entrepreneurial preachers like Rev. Ike who translate vast numbers of peoples' personal despair into self-serving lucrative ends. Second, the politically cautious yet open-ended perspective of moderates like Rev. Jemison and liberals like Rev. Hooks. Third, the prophetically audacious and authentically counter-hegemonic praxis of leftists like Rev. Daughtry and left-liberals like Rev. Lowery. And lastly, the courageous campaign of Rev. Jesse Jackson.

The central role of the Black Church in black America ensures its invidious manipulation. Given its relatively loose, uncomplicated requirements for membership and its open and easy access to leadership, the Black Church is a sitting duck for charismatic con-men. And there is a long tradition of such behavior in Afro-American Christianity. This tradition is captive in American civil religion in that it is usually couched in economic terms: The American Way of Life can be yours if you would only surrender yourself, accept Jesus Christ and financially support my ministry! The present crises in black America have made this enticing invitation attractive to many black evangelical Christians in deep psychological and pecuniary need. It is this conservative tradition which warrants the vehement and often vociferous criticisms directed at the Black Church by insiders and outsiders.

Yet this conservative response is not that of the majority of black Christians. Rather, most identify with the viewpoints put forward by the Revs. Jemison and Hooks. After a long and drawn-out battle over the leadership of the National Baptist Convention, Rev. Jemison was able to defrock the perennial Rev. J.H. Jackson. It was Rev. J.H. Jackson who forced Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. to break away from the National Baptist Convention in 1961 and form his own Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc. This rupture not only weakened King's movement; it also left many black Baptists torn between King's social gospel and the old Convention's rich heritage. My own beloved grandfather, Rev. Clifton L. West, Sr. who pastored a church in Oklahoma for forty years, struggled with this dual allegiance until his death in 1979. With the replacement of Rev. J.H. Jackson in September 1982, sighs of relief and hopes for reconciliation prevaded many black Baptists across the country. Since Rev. Jesse Jackson's support of Rev. Jemison was crucial for his election, there is real possibility for a more prophetic outlook on behalf of the leadership of The National Baptist Convention. So far Rev. Jemison is proceeding cautiously, sending out propheti- rhetorical signs yet guarding his priestly organization from discord. For example, the over twenty-year reign of Rev. J.H. Jackson has led him to promote a ten year limit on the presidency. His friendship with Rev. Jesse Jackson has prompted him to support a vast voter registration drive. And his embarassment of the Convention's treatment of King has resulted in a $100,000 donation to Morehouse College (King's alma mater) to complete its chapel and build a monument honoring King. Rev. Jemison recently made these proposals--which were ratified by the delegates--in September 1983 at the Convention's largest gathering in its history: roughly 35,000 delegates attended its deliberations in Los Angeles. So this religious body is now experiencing new life. Whether it decides to become more openly progressive and prophetic remains an open question.

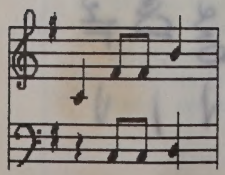
Needless to say, Rev. Hooks' NAACP is explicitly political, unashamed of its old-style liberalism and reluctant to move toward a more militant progressivism. Echoing the hidden fears and anxieties of the black middle class and stable working class, the NAACP senses that there are new currents on the move in the black community but, in true traditionalist style, it is unwilling to allow itself to be the guinea pig. Given its deep roots in black churches, it is no accident that it applauds the ascendancy of Rev. Jemison while it shares his cautious perspective. In his poignant speech during the March on Washington (August 1983), Rev. Hooks declared war on Reaganism and then proceeded to invoke the Afro-American Christian God of the oppressed and down trodden. This unusual public display of Christian piety and belief on behalf of a leader of a black secular organization suggests that much is stirring within him. In light of the recent internal turmoil

Dynamics of Oppression

a lesbian film maker, Gretta Shieller got the idea for putting together info about gay life befor Stonewall

- Speakeasy
- Garden of Joy /
- Gladys Bentley - Earnestine
- Langston Hughes
- Well of Lonliness
- Natsiasm ended early feminist + gay movement
- Not like a man -- more like a girl
- Needed for specialist job, then lesb. tolerated
- Women/soldiers without guns able to leave home without being pregnant
- Barbara Gittings
- Roy Cone
  900 to 1000 State Dept. personel dismissed
- Mattachine / Harry Hay - Roudy
- One + " Review
- Daughters of Bulitus / P. Lyon + ...
- The Ladder (lesbian publication)

CAROLYN J. MOBLEY, BA, MRE
1150 Lynhurst Dr. SW
Atlanta, GA 30311



A MINISTRY OF INSPIRATION

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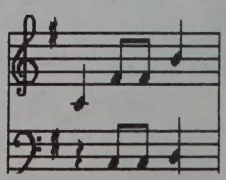

I AM

I AM a black woman / Carolyn

I AM a lesbian

I AM a Christian

I AM a thinking person and honest

I AM a singer / musician

I AM an extravert

I AM loving / trusting

I AM a compassionate / caring person

I AM a leader

I AM a follower

Carolyn / woman

Christian

trusting person and harvest

Nurserian / simple

servant

trusting

compassionate / loving person

"TONGUES UNTIED"

As you watch the videotape, consider these questions:

- The individuals progress through stages of acceptance/development. What are they?

- What examples of "RACISM" are pointed out in the videotape?

- What is said about "ANGER"? What examples are used?

- What do you think is meant by "BEING INVISIBLE"? Give examples.

- Have you been present or heard about situations in Houston that match any of those discussed in the videotape? Give examples.

EXAMPLES OF RACISM

1. Teacher to Native American and/or Hispanic child: "For your own good, you will be punished if I ever hear you using any language but English in class.

2. A store clerk suspects that black children in his store want to steal candy but that white children want to buy candy. He treats the black children as probable delinquents and the white children as probable customers.

3. A suburban community passes a zoning law prohibiting low-cost multiple dwelling housing. Its official reason is to prevent overcrowding, but the effect is to prevent minorities from moving to areas where industry is expanding and jobs are available.

4. A black and a white family both move and enroll their children in a desegregated school. Previous school records have not yet arrived. The guidance counselor puts the white child into an upper "track" class and the black child in one of the low "track" classes.

5. A Louisiana state representative recently opposed proposals to eliminate racial labels on blood plasma in his state's hospitals. He ignored the fact that Dr. Charles Drew, a black surgeon, perfected the modern blood bank system.

6. Textbooks which teach: Columbus "discovered" America...The pioneers "settled" the West...and have a chapter on "The Negro Problem", "The Indian Problem", but never on "The White Problem".

in the NAACP (e.g. his clash with his former Chairperson of the Board, Margaret Bush Wilson) and the barrage of criticisms from various groups in the black community, Rev. Hooks may indeed be reassessing the direction and vision of the NAACP, the most distinguished black protest organization in Afro-American history. Rev. Hooks certainly possesses the integrity and will to change courses at this crucial historical moment; whether the NAACP has the courage and wherewithal to do so awaits to be seen.

The third response to the prevailing crises in Black America by Afro-American Christian leftists and left-liberals is salutary yet still marginal. It is salutary in that it speaks to the great issues of our time, e.g. Third World struggles against U.S. and/or Soviet domination, maldistribution of wealth in the world, the South African apartheid regime, etc., and links these issues to the Afro-American struggle for freedom. Under the dynamic leadership of Rev. Herbert Daughtry, the National Black United Front (composed of black Christians, Marxists, nationalists and left-liberals) has established itself as the leading voice of progressive black America. Far beyond liberalism and indifferent to social democracy, this Christian-headed group is staunchly anti-U.S. imperialist and vaguely pro-socialist with a black nationalist twist. With the founding of the African Peoples' Christian Organization in March 1983, Rev. Daughtry has extended his vision by supplementing the National Black United Front with an exclusively Christian organization, especially for those prophetic black Christians demoralized and debilitated by the secular ideological battles in NBUF. Rev. Daughtry continues to head both organizations. Rev. Lowery's Southern Christian Leadership Conference--much like The Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc. which still upholds the legacy of King--courageously articulates the needs and interests of the black poor, but with much less ideological fervor and international visibility. Armed with highly talented young leaders, such as Mark Ridley-Thomas in Los Angeles, Rev. Lowery's SCLC sustains the most impressive Christian ecumenical (across black Christian denominations) progressive group in the USA. Yet it still falls short of the comprehensive Christian analysis and vision of Rev. Daughtry's progressive NBUF and prophetic APCO.

Despite their salutary presence and potential growth, these organizations remain marginal to the conscience and praxis of black America. The hegemony of liberal political ideology still holds fast in black America and its Christian churches. Surely the black working poor and underclass sense that liberalism is insufficient, yet this sense is not articulated in political forms. Even Revs. Daughtry and Lowery's groups principally lie outside of the black underclass, with deep roots in regional sections of the country among the working poor and working class. Yet even the marginality of these groups is encouraging, for they constitute an influential marginality which puts

necessary pressure on the more visible liberal organizations. They also link the rich tradition of Afro-American Christianity to more sophisticated social analyses, more inclusive moral visions and more ambitious (though propitious) political praxis.

The last response of the Black Church to the present-day crises of black America is now a major media event: the exciting candidacy of one of the sons of the Black Church, Rev. Jesse Jackson. This is an event of utmost importance to black Church people. Not since the appearance of King, have black christians had a national figure who commands so much nonblack attention. In a moving interview years ago in Ebony magazine (the leading black American magazine), Rev. Jesse Jackson put forward the deep Christian roots of his political practice. This kind of existential candor goes far with the Black Church. The basic issue is not the extent to which the Black Church will support Rev. Jackson, but rather the way in which the Black Church views Rev. Jackson as an extension of itself: what it has produced and given to the nation. Politically, Rev. Jackson remains close to most voting black Americans: liberal on domestic socioeconomic issues, left-liberal on international issues and ambivalent on cultural issues. Yet, he is much more progressive than any of the white candidates vying for the nomination of the Democratic Party. His candidacy can broaden the perimeters of public discourse in American politics, politically enliven many dormant black voters and possibly bring together the prophetic forces in the Black Church; a recent breakfast meeting of local black leaders for Rev. Jackson held in Rev. Daughtry's The House of the Lord Church in Brooklyn illustrates this possible unity.

So despite the numerous processes of modernization occurring in black America, the prophetic Black Church remains the major source for political leadership. But if it is more adequately to meet the present challenges, it must move toward more sophisticated social analyses of the economic depression in black America. Such analyses should highlight the shifting international division of labor and the dominant role of corporate power in the USA. This analysis should be guided by an egalitarian vision which embraces the needs of working class and underclass Hispanics, Asians, women, whites, as well as the concerns of ecologists, feminists and peace activists. Lastly, this analysis and vision must be coupled with a spiritual awakening which combats the rapacious hedonism and narcissism in late U.S. capitalist culture, thereby enabling a more virtuous and viable left in the USA.

CLARENCE E. GLOVER, JR.
DIRECTOR OF INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION
AND MINORITY STUDENT AFFAIRS

HUGHES-TRIGG STUDENT CENTER
SUITE 318
BOX 355 • SMU STATION
DALLAS, TEXAS 75275
(214) 692-4580

On Being African American

The Challenge of a New Generation

by Clarence E. Glover, Jr.

Colored, Negro, Black, Afro-American, African-American—which of these names describes you? Have you thought about it? Does it really matter? Have you stopped to give any thought as to how others perceive you? How you perceive yourself? The question of identity is important for any people who are determined to build the sense of ethnic solidarity necessary for positive progression. Those who have not clearly and properly identified themselves are subject to yielding the right of definition and direction to outside forces.

As the New Generation of African-Americans, you face a two-fold challenge—to know yourselves and your culture, and to take steps to preserve that cultural identity.

Knowing Ourselves

For any ethnic group to be healthy, whole and productive, that by which they identify themselves must reflect their genuine origin, culture, values and traditions. Invoking a name carries with it the power of character. What we ultimately call ourselves will determine what we will do and become in the future. How we define ourselves will determine our limits and possibilities. The ultimate liberation of a people comes when they control the definition of themselves and what they seek to be called. It is no wonder that one of the first things Europeans did to our African ancestors was to force them to change their names and forget their language. Erasing our languages led to the redefinition of our personhood and the modification of our culture on the American soil, thus beginning our long journey through a midnight of slavery and second class citizenship. Forced to act in such a way to always appease "the overseer," many of our ancestors went along to get along. At the same time, they dreamed of a day when their children and their children's children would not have to experience what W.E.B. Dubois called "our twoness."

And yet in the midst of this seemingly hopeless condition, moving from nigger to colored, to Negro, to Black, we have now reached a level at which we can begin to liberate ourselves from "our twoness," and reclaim what was taken from our ancestors on the shores of our ancestral homeland: our identity as an AFRICAN people. We can begin to understand in a deeper sense the meaning of our painful pilgrimage to American citizenship.

Who, then, are we? We are an African people of American citizenship. We are a hyphenated people, like our fellow citizens—Polish-American, Mexican-American, Irish-American, Arab-American, Scottish-American. And yet, because of the repressive nature of slavery and racism, we have not been able to pass down from generation to generation the meaning of our culture, the history of our people, the traditions of our elders or the wealth of our labor. While our presence in this country doubles and even triples that of many of our fellow citizens whose parents and grandparents came over as immigrants during "the European Exodus," our social, economic, and political development lags far behind.

Deeply aware of the thousands of

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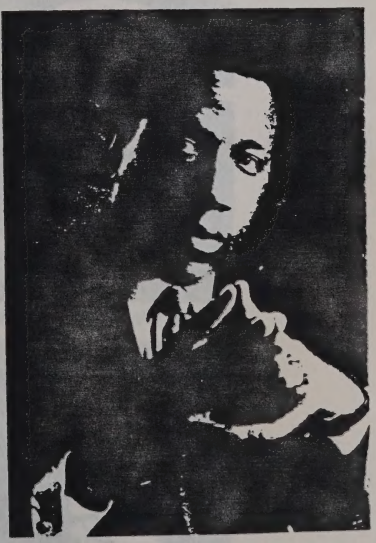

Clarence Glover

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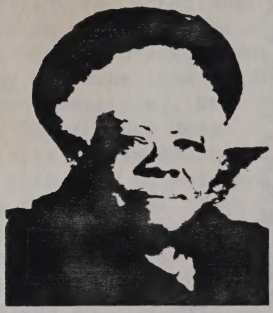
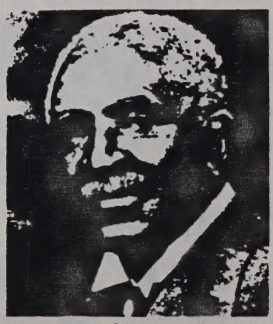
W.E.B. DuBois



Mary McLeod Bethune



George Washington Carver

Carter G. Woodson

commentaries written on the plight of our people, I approach this article with a great deal of concern and care. What can be said that can ultimately make a difference for our people? I dare not venture down the traditional paths of political, educational, or economic analysis, attempting to expose only the need to get involved, go to school, or get a job. My efforts, however, shall be focused on the foundation upon which the success of all of these areas is built, which is the basic question of identity. Without a clear understanding of who we are as individuals or as a people, we run the risk of suffering from personal and collective cultural amnesia—unable to clearly focus on our future because we have forgotten our past.

If we are an African people of American citizenship, what does this mean for us as we face the year 2000 and beyond? It means that we must develop a positive understanding of our African heritage, an understanding that will transform the stereotype of our ancestral homeland as a dark backward continent, void of significant history and culture. We must realize that Africa is the birthplace of humanity and the propagator of a great people who bequeathed to the world science, math, astrology, religion, and governmental systems. We must also develop a deeper appreciation of our genetic makeup, which alone can encompass the rainbow of the human family, ranging from "ink to pink." This understanding must lead us away from the blind biases we have of our brothers and sisters from the African continent today, and guide us toward embracing them as kin who have only been separated by time and distance. Neither should Africans from the continent allow their perceptions of us as African-Americans to be scarred by the temporary conditions of slavery and colonialism, but rather should look to the future with us as a people of common heritage. Long past is the time that we view each other from distant points of reference. The call for the New Generation should be "All Africans Unite."

To understand the heritage we have been forced to forget, we must engage in an extensive re-education process. As Dr. Carter G. Woodson, the father of African-American history, made us aware, we are a "miseducated people in need of re-education." The New Generation must come to realize the difference between "education" and "training." Truly educated people have a sense of their history and humanity, and are able to apply the lessons of history to their contemporary conditions. On the other hand, people who have only been trained lack the necessary historical perspectives to enhance their lives or the lives of their progeny. They fall victim to those who construct for them an image of their past that is self-destructive for their present, thus limiting their future. But now because the New Generation does not suffer from the chains of chattel slavery, or feel the degrading classification of second class citizenship, they have an opportunity and responsibility to take up the new liberation struggle. That struggle is "Intellectual Militancy"—a militancy that demands not only a mastery of the early three "R's": "reading, 'riting, and 'rithmetic," but also the mastery of what I call the new three "R's": Reconstruction, Rethinking, and Redirection.

We must seek to reconstruct the meaning of our past. We can start by reading the right literature. While there are many books and periodicals to choose from, one can begin with some of the basics, such as, *The Mis-Education of the Negro*, by Dr. Carter G. Woodson, *The Destruction of Black Civilization*, by Chancellor Williams, *Stolen Legacy*, by George G. M. James, *Before the Mayflower*, by Lerone Bennett, *The African Presence in Ancient America: They Came Before Columbus*, and *Blacks in Science* by Dr. Ivan Van Sertima, *The Black Scholar Journal*, and

Continued on next page

Designing a Racist Church

GOALS

1. To identify the key elements of racism.
2. To discover how racism functions in our church.

Instructions

1. Design a racist church. It can be blatantly racist or subtly racist. Be sure to describe the following:

   a. The makeup of the church.
   b. Who makes the decisions.
   c. How the decisions are made.
   d. Who has control of money.
   e. Who sets up the formal policy of the church.
   f. Who sets up the informal policy of the church.
   g. The roles of the various institutions of the church--board of directors, council of ministries, music ministry, etc.

Adapted from the original design created by Duke Harris, Pat Bidol, and Dan Kirchbaum. Taken from White Awareness by Judy H. Katz.

RACIST VS. ANTI-RACIST

	ACTIVE	PASSIVE
RACIST	David Duke Jessie Helms Jerry Fallwell Larouche	Silent Majority US President Cooperations
ANTI-RACIST	M C King, Jr / J F Kennedy Jessie Jackson Gloria Steinbeam Ann Richards Troy Prewy	

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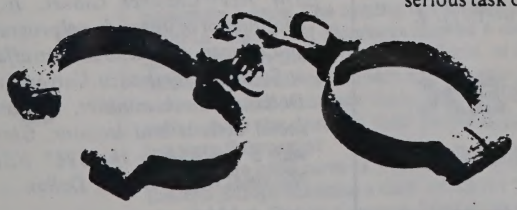
Rosa Parks arrested after refusing to sit at the back of a Montgomery, Alabama bus, 1955; Slave auction in New Orleans; African-Americans taking to the streets for their rights



African News. These books and periodicals, while a treasure chest of knowledge on Africa and African-American history and culture, may be difficult to find in public or school libraries. You may do well to seek out African-American bookstores in your city or in other cities. Of one thing you can be certain: Once discovered, they will only be the beginning of a life of new discoveries about yourself and your people. No African-American home should be without a collection of these and other books and periodicals about our people. Care should be taken to select African or African-American authors or other authors who are genuinely sensitive to our history and culture.

Not only must we reconstruct the past, we must also be about the serious task of re-thinking our present condition. To do this we must seek to establish principles of individual and collective respect. No longer can we afford to live in vacuums. There must be a reestablishment of "the extended family" and the values that constitute it. We must nurture kinship ties between those who are our kin by birth and by heritage. We must work to rid ourselves of the destructive concept of "I" or "me" and rediscover the power in "we" and "us.". We must once again extend with warm affection the greetings of "brother" or "sister" and reclaim our role as being each other's keeper.

If we are to re-think our present condition we must dare to listen to our elders. We cannot afford to let the worth of their knowledge escape us with the passing of time. The New Generation must lend a listening ear to The Old Generation, in an effort to continue the struggle until we have reached total liberation. The time we devote to our elders will prove to be of invaluable importance. As the New Generation listens to the Old Generation, they become bridge builders for tomorrow—passing, preserving and protecting those valuable principles necessary for the continual life of our people.

Preserving Our Identity

America is not a "melting pot" but a "stew pot" of distinctive cultures. We, like other cultures, must make sure that the genuineness of our contributions are not overshadowed with racism, segregation, or discrimination. If we do not retain such things as jazz, spirituals, gospel, gumbo, yams, braids, and even rapping and other forms of cultural expressions as authentically ours, history may record them as someone else's creation.

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Head of statue of Amenemhet III, Twelfth Dynasty, Egypt

We also need to patronize African-American museums and cultural societies, and invest in Black art.

We must with careful precision work to redirect the future of African people everywhere. Like a keen mathematician, we must calculate our every move, being sure to include the proper variables necessary to our total success. This implies our movement through educational institutions, political systems, religious organizations and economic structures. We must use the result of the first two efforts, reconstruction and rethinking, to chart a clear and sure course for the future, one that is built on a firm foundation of educational, political, religious and economic values. Our actions today and tomorrow must be the collective results of informed, liberated minds, capable of building and sustaining liberating institutions.

Today's generation of African-Americans are a gifted and blessed generation. Many have been privileged to rise above the pits of perpetual pity, and have seen the sunlight of new opportunity. But, these African-Americans, the lawyers, doctors, educators, engineers, entrepreneurs and scientists, those who W.E.B. DuBois called "the talented tenth," must not just bathe in the sunlight of their success. Rather they must dare to reach back into the shadows of our struggle and bring forth those yet struggling, always remembering that each person's success is built on someone else's shoulder. For college students, "reaching back" can mean devoting time to tutoring and mentoring younger students, or getting involved in socio-political issues such as the anti-apartheid movement.

Today the voices of our ancestors cry to us from the graves. They seek to know, "What will become of this new generation?" Will it go forward to rekindle the bright flame of our glorious past? Or will we allow the sins of our own selfishness to blow out the light that leads to our future? The challenge is ours and the time is NOW!

The Rev. Clarence Glover, Jr. is coordinator of intercultural programs and African-American student affairs at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, TX. A minister, educator, social activist and lecturer, Glover was a speaker at the 1987 NSBE National Conference in Dallas.

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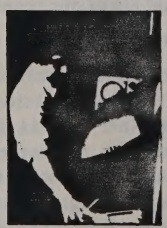

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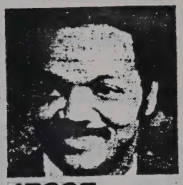
Make a Little History of Your Own

...oise we hear
...entless grinding of the
justice, but a lot of bureaucratic
spinning, signifying not much.
- Ron You can say the system works. But can

Jim Wright is senior columnist of The Dallas Morning News. *His column is distributed by the KRTN News Wire.*

The plague of stereotypes



JESSE JACKSON

Police now believe that a coldblooded murderer in Boston plotted two months ago to kill his pregnant wife, then produced an instant alibi by blaming his crime on an African-American man. Charles Stuart knew that pulling the race cord would ring the bells of fear in a nation still tasting the lingering poison of a presidential campaign that played on racial anxiety. The police discovered Mr. Stuart's suspected role in his wife's death only when his brother turned him in. Then Charles Stuart, who understood how racism worked in America, jumped off a bridge.

This monstrous episode has much to teach us about the dynamics of racism in our country. The brutal ideology that was set back by the Civil War, Reconstruction and the civil rights movement has returned with tremendous force during the past decade.

Candidate Ronald Reagan sent the first deafening race signal in 1980 with his transparent appeal to states' rights in Philadelphia, Miss., where Michael Schwerner, James Cheney and Andrew Goodman (two Jews and one African-American) were killed by white supremacists in 1964.

And so the racial agenda for the Reagan-Bush years was set: the diluting of the Civil Rights Commission; amid world protest, the laying of a wreath in a cemetery in Bitburg where some Nazi SS members were buried; the attack on affirmative action; President Reagan's suggestion in 1983 that Dr. Martin Luther King was a communist; the retrenchment on civil rights and social justice; the George Bush campaign committee that included members known for past anti-Semitic activities; and the shameful presidential campaign in 1988 that featured furloughed prisoner Willie Horton. As many have noted, President Reagan took the shame and guilt out of racism.

In foreign policy, too, racism made a comeback. The "constructive engagement" with the apartheid government in South Africa became the symbol of the Reagan-Bush approach to the human rights of non-white people. The arming of rampaging guerrillas in Angola and Nicaragua showed a shocking indifference to life in the Third World, as did the military invasions of Grenada and Panama. Would we be so quick to invade these nations and so cavalier about the death of their people if those dying were Europeans?

Even the good news of walls tumbling down in Eastern Europe contains a dark lining for the people of Africa. For, as Congress hurried to approve millions more for Eastern Europe, African experts noted the total U.S. aid to the countries of sub-Saharan Africa was likely to fall as a result.

Closer to home, it was shocking to watch the misplaced priorities over the last few weeks as letter-bombs exploded in the hands of judges and NAACP leaders across the South while President Bush placed a bounty on the head of Gen. Manuel Noriega. Where are the bounties on the heads of the white supremacists terrorizing citizens and public officials in America?

The racism that still contaminates public policy today must be overcome. The war on drugs, for example, will go nowhere as long as we accept the myth that the average drug user is an African-American male. The reality, according to the National Parents' Resource Institute for Drug Education, is that the average drug user is a white male, and drug problems are "significantly worse" among white youths than African-American youths. The least likely drug user is an African-American female.

And yet the police arrest African-Americans at a rate far higher than they arrest whites. While African-Americans constitute only 12 percent of those who abuse drugs, according to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, they make up 38 percent of drug arrests. This means that African-Americans constitute a small minority of drug users but a vastly disproportionate percentage of prisoners taken in the war on drugs. That is not right.

Meanwhile, the African-American middle class is shrinking, hanging on the precipice. While college-educated white men earn an average $35,701 a year, African-American male college graduates earn an average of $26,550.

So we have much work ahead of us to take down our own wall — the wall of racism and hatred. As the deceitful Charles Stuart showed us before his leap from the bridge, it is far too easy in America to blame African-Americans.

As we celebrate the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, we must remember racism is good neither for the racist nor for the victim. It is personally destructive, politically divisive, economically exploitative and theologically a sin. Racism is contempt for God because it assumes that God made an error in creating a world of difference.

As Dr. Martin Luther King said, "All life is interrelated. All humanity is involved in but a single process, and to the degree I harm my brother, to that extent I harm myself."

Jesse Jackson's column is distributed by the Los Angeles Times Syndicate.

and soon I was crying with all my being.

And soon I was aware that he was sobbing, too, as deeply as I, and the words which came to me from him were, "Yes. You are right. I see it, too, and I never thought it would be like this." We cried for a long time and it was clear, although unspoken, that if either of the two of us were going to speak against the atrocity, it would be me and not him. It was also clear that I was not alone.

We are the voices and hands and the bodies through which the vision of Jesus of Nazareth must come alive. We, like him, may be tried for heresy by churches or killed by governments. Certainly the governments and religious authorities are not on our side. We should not find that at all surprising.

FOOTNOTES

1. Gyn/Ecology, Boston: Beacon Press, 1978, p. 38.
2. Worship in Song, Lillenas Publishing Company, Kansas City, MO, 1972. No. 37, 241, 105, 235, 58, 94, 367, 44.
3. Unpublished sermon, UTS, Nov. 8, 1978, p. 5-6.
4. Faith and Fratricide: The Theological Roots of Anti-Semitism, Seabury Press, NY, 1974, p. 162.
5. Eastern Ministers Conference, Toronto, June 21, 1980.

RACE AND THE LESBIAN/GAY COMMUNITY

RENEE McCOY

HOW DOES ONE approach the topic of race and the Lesbian/Gay Christian without sounding bitter? How does a Black Christian Lesbian address white Lesbians and Gay Christians about the racial situation in UFMCC without sounding or feeling like one is begging for yet another handout of kindness from yet another white institution? Without feeling like yet another request is being made for God given human rights, for respect for God given human pride and dignity? How can I keep from feeling like I'm crawling on my knees to the base of a white painted totem, carved with faces resembling days of my past?

My dilemma when putting this together came down to: How to not guilt trip, not attack, not sound militant, be received lovingly, influence people to positive action, keep their attention, make them feel my love for them, help them understand my oppression, sound and be Christian and tell the truth at the same time.

I decided that the best I could do would be to be as simple as possible. My understanding of life comes through simple dealings with life. Our survival in this life, too, I believe, will come through an array of simple actions. So much of our past has been cluttered with very real complexities of race and Christianity. Most of the time the complexities with which we involve ourselves in efforts to understand the racial situation clog our pores so much that we can never be free and flexible enough to clean ourselves all over.

So I will begin by sharing with you my own simple understanding and impression of RAce and Christianity as an issue in UFMCC: UFMCC does not include a ministry to Third World people. Theoretically, UFMCC is a Christian Church open to all. Practically, however, UFMCC is a white Lesbian and Gay Church controlled and governed by white people, building structures that are inclusive only of themselves and their whiteness, calling themselves Christians seemingly for the accountability the word lends to their struggle against a homophobic society.

Now, many may disagree. For those who do, I remind you that this is my impression of UFMCC. Let me also say that I do not believe that the bleakness of this image will remain. My belief in and hope for change is what keeps me clinging to UFMCC. And, I draw an abundant amount of strength and energy from the openness that is being born throughout this fellowship. Still this is my today impression of UFMCC. Those who disagree may say this is a strong and untrue image. They will say that Third World people are just as welcome as anyone else. Others who disagree may do so not because my image is untrue but because it's unfair. They are the ones whose questions are: What are we doing wrong? and What can we do? Those are the two questions I will seek to answer simply in this simple presentation.

The answer to what is UFMCC doing wrong is 1) we bring white racial attitudes, values and behavior into the mainstream of UFMCC operation; and 2) there is a basic blindness throughout UFMCC to Third World oppression, evidenced by UFMCC's lack of involvement in a liberation process for Third World people.

I need to address each of these answers repeatedly. The first, bringing white racial attitudes, values and behavior into the operation of UFMCC, is perhaps easier for me to understand. Before whites realized they were Lesbians or Gay they were in touch with the special-ness of their whiteness. Family and educational conditioning subtly and blatantly brought everyone to believe that white was better, white was privileged, white was powerful, white was right. Look out for number one was the battle cry, and everyone knew who was number one. Through the use of stereotypes, language, media, educational institutions, the Church, etc., the concept of white superiority was maintained. Included in this concept was the belief, implied or stated, that white lifestyles were the only valid ones.

Lesbians and gay men, after such lengthy exposure to such conditioning, perhaps believed that their sexual lifestyles were not in complete violation of the American Dream unless they were not basically white. It's sort of like as long as whatever you do does not conradict your whiteness there is still a change for rightness. For this reason, white Christian Lesbians and gay men still refer to Blacks as niggers, tell racial jokes and build all white institutions "for whites only." For this reason liberal white Lesbians and gay men judge Third World people as worthy of their love and acceptance only if they change and become more like them. They must speak good standard American English, have a better than average job, at least three white friends (preferably none of which are lovers), be well educated, upwardly mobile, live in a ranch house, have two cars and 2.3 children. Because the values learned in white heterosexual communities become affixed to those whites embracing Lesbian and gay lifestyles, UFMCC does not even approach ministering to Third World Lesbians and gays and continues to remain

Renee McCoy is Assistant Coordinator of the Northeast District, UFMCC, and Chair of the UFMCC Committee on Racism.

a white institution waving a banner of Christianity.

LOOK, SEE YOUR SISTER

So you, sisters, brothers, white
say you love me.
want to be for me
a supportive community
to me
a Christian community
want to decrease my anguish;
want to stand by my side
in my struggle
offer me a Church home
united in the Body of Christ
build a Kingdom
where we're all united
in Christian fellowship.
Sisters, brothers, us all.

Well,
there's a few things first you must know
a few things first you need to know
my lesbian and gay
Sisters, brothers us all.

If this thing is going to work
we have to be real clear
about who we each are.
I was raised to know you
taught to understand you
more than myself:
conditioned to be more you
than to be myself:
conditioned to accept your life
as a state better than my own
taught to aspire to be you
while grappling with the reality
of life's impossibilities
which sought to negate
the possibilities of my own reality.

Well, you,
Lesbian/Gay Christian, white
Sisters, brothers, us all
must know
that I am
in spite of 400 years of work to make me you
that I am not
nor will I ever be
you.

You,
Lesbian/Gay Christian white
must know who it is
that your faith calls
you to accept/welcome/reach out to

I am all
of who I am.
I am Black as the night
I am red as Georgia clay
brown as roasted coffee
yellow as a sunrise
and various shades of them all.

I am the one
you privately call nigger
chink, spade,
the Indian of giver,
the black of black balled
while you
are the white of lie
the white of white washed.

I am the punk kid
the hoodlum
the young rowdy

I play my music loud
I hang out in the parks
I laugh at silly white folks
I smoke dope on the streets
I drink wine on the stoops
I talk loud on the subways
I don't speak English so good
I wear bright colors
My food is greasy, starchy and smells funny.

Do you still want me?
Are we still going to build a Kingdom?
Are you still with me?

I walk around the streets
in the day time
playing disco on my radio
loud.

I call my woman "baby"
soft and low,
strong and mello.

I call a mother fucker
a mother fucker
I call a white son-of-a-bitch
a white son-of-a-bitch.

I am the "them"
and the "those people"

They are me
and I am them

I'm the one you worry 'bout
raping your sister
The one you take classes
to defend yourself
against.

Are you still with me?
Is there room for me
in your pews?
your supportive community?

I call my woman
my woman
I call myself
her woman
and we make love
every chance we get
fiercely, flamboyantly
without asking each other
what does this mean
to the revolution?
what does God think?
(we know, you know)
without first deciding
if this is politically correct,
or theologically sound;
without giving a damn
whether our passion
is anything more
than a good feeling
(It is, you know)
Are you still with me?
Is there room for me in your pew?

You say you want/need me
in your church;
will welcome me and mine
fight with/for my liberation
our liberation
Let's build a Kingdom, us all.

Do you know
how big my life is
how big my oppression
how big I am
Are you still with me?
Is there room in your pew
for me? [1]

What are we doing wrong? UFMCC has not seen the Third World basically because it's been blinded by the white of its life.

Another value brought with whites into UFMCC is the land-of-opportunity value. This says that all favors of a community should be earned and everyone has equal opportunity and equal access to the fruits. Because of this no direct outreach is done directly to Third World communities. They can find out about us just like everyone else. (The other side of this is, we don't want them to feel different.) And the lack of outreach leaves us with little Third World visibility, almost no Third World ministers, very few Third World leadership and none at levels of intense control – policymaking or financial management.

The second reason for the lack of Third World people in UFMCC is basic blindness to Third World oppression, evidenced by UFMCC's lack of involvement in a liberation process for Third World people. This reason is less easy, more, virtually impossible for me to understand. It's hardest to understand when I think about UFMCC being born in 1968 when this country was wrought with racial unrest. The birth of UFMCC was preceeded by race riots and civil rights demonstrations.

In my most paranoid states, I think that it was no accident that the gay liberation movement reared its head when this nation was beginning to face the facts of racial situations. Sometimes I feel gay liberation to be yet another ploy to distract the people's attention away from the realities of racism. Sort of goes back to me first. But then there are Third World Lesbians and Gay men. Still it's hard to understnad how people with a Christian consciousness could build an institution which ignored the basic survival needs of another people especially when America's melting pot was boiling over from the pollution of racial oppression, when the stench of the realities of Third World existence was still fresh in our nostrils.

It amazes me even more when all of a sudden that same institution is jolted into the world by an issue like Cuban refugees and rally to the cause of starving, homeless Third World people in the name of Christian concern and obligation . . . and good public relations and press. It amazes me because in every city where there is an MCC Church, communities exist that are even more desolate than the Cuban situation. In every city where MCC churches are, there are hundreds, thousands of starving, homeless, struggling Third World people many of whom are Lesbians and Gay men, that UFMCC has ignored year after year of its existence. Even on the refugee issue it amazes me even more that there is no mention of the Haitian refugee situation which is occurring at the same time. The difference, they say, is that the Haitians are not political prisoners. The difference is that the Haitians are Black skinned people and this society has always been more open to the possible humanness of the fairer skinned foreigner.

Third World people do not come to UFMCC because UFMCC initiates no programs to meet their needs unless it's of the white liberal missionizing kind such as the Cuban refugee outreach. The second question I hear in response to my image of UFMCC is, what can we do? I remind you of my goal in this presentation to keep it simple. What we can do is simply follow Jesus. A Christian is one who follows Jesus Christ. We simply follow Jesus.

In his book, *Christ and Counter-Christ*, Carl Braaten [2] lists eight characteristics of Jesus Christ. I would like for us to look at them in light of race and the Gay/Lesbian Christian.

1) The demand for total change. Christ continually called for all who followed him to change their lives completely. A total change means for us to re-think and re-structure our values and racial attitudes in light of Christian teachings. A total change means deprogramming ourselves on ways of relating to each other.

2) The concept of the demonic. Jesus was aware of negative forces pulling against him. We, too, need to be aware of the demonic which shows itself in conditioning, attitudes of superiority, blindness to realities and concern only for our own survival.

3) The sign of the times. Jesus knew that the existing social conditions were only warnings of even more devastating horrors. We must not kid ourselves into believing that things will get better by and by if we just sit patiently and wait.

4) The urgency of the moment. Jesus knew that there was no time to be lukewarm. We, too, are faced with the urgency of change in the racial situation. Either we are for positive growth and change or we are against it.

5) Unconditional surrender. Jesus' life called for complete surrender, holding back nothing, holding onto nothing. As Christians, followers of Jesus the Christ, we, too, are called to let go of all comforts, our racial privilege, all racial illusions of power and grandeur, and surrender completely to God's will that we be united all in one Body, one Kingdom.

6) The sixth characteristic of Jesus is called the proletarian principle. The revolution which Jesus put into motion involved the working class, the proletariat and the dispossessed. It called for an end to the worship of money and riches as though they were gods. As Christians we, too, are called to abandon the worship of material goods. We are called to respond in revolutionary ways to the needs of all people and the destruction of the privileged class.

7) The reversal of roles. This characteristic Jesus revealed in saying such as the last shall be first and the first last. The white Lesbian and Gay Christian must be willing to do all he/she can to help facilitate the liberation of the Third World (sort of a Christian affirmative action program). Sometimes this will mean bending the rules

a little bit to provide Third World leadership; or providing unrestricted funds for Third World people to help themselves; or not imposing white values to the interpretation of Third World lifestyles.

8) The final characteristic of Jesus Christ is that the Christian experiences the birth pangs of a glorious future. The journey to racial harmony and Third World visibility does not carry with it an assurance of comfort. In fact, quite the contrary is true. To come face to face with the horrors of past and present realities of racial oppression is painful for all involved. I'm sure Jesus suffered much as the pain and suffering of the people became real and not just something he read about in the *Jerusalem Times*. As white Lesbian and Gay Christians realize the presence of Third World pain *plus* their own participation in the continuance of that pain, they will themselves experience utter pain. And the pain will increase with every privilege, every comfort whites have to surrender. However, as with the pain Jesus experienced, it is good and healthy to have happen. It is through these particular pains that we grow. It was through suffering and death that Jesus was given new life, a life through and in which we all live.

What to do? On the issue of race, the Lesbian/Gay Christian is called simply to follow Jesus, to re-think, re-structure, re-work all that we call us, to seriously involve ourselves in a total recommitment, total, radical change process expanding our love to truly embrace all people.

I am the them
and the those people
They are me
and I am them
I'm the one you worry 'bout
raping your sister
the one you take classes
to defend yourself against.
Are you still with me?
Is there room for me
in your pew?

1. Unpublished poem by Renee McCoy.
2. Braaten, Carl. *Christ and Counter-Christ* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press) pp. 111-113.

More on Methodists

LAST ISSUE WE reported briefly on the General Conference of the United Methodist Church in April. Here, now, are more details:

From the start, the 9.7 million-member denomination's confab was pervaded by the issue of homosexuality. It came up the first night in an episcopal address, and it came up the next morning at a plenary session where a majority of delegates supported a motion to deal with the issue "at the earliest feasible time." It kept erupting throughout.

When it was finally over, the Conference had left the church's stance on homosexuality in approximately the same place it was four years ago:

* The phrase from the church's Social Principles would be retained: "... we do not condone the practice of homosexuality and consider this practice incompatible with Christian teaching."
* A new phrase would be added to the list of offenses for which a minister may be charged and removed: "... practices declared by the United Methodist Church to be incompatible with Christian teaching." That's so anti-gay forces can turn to the Social Principles as authority for removing homosexuals.
* Paragraph 906.13 in the Book of Discipline would remain, making the Council on Finance and Administration responsible for making sure that no United Methodist funds go to any gay caucus or get used to "promote the acceptance of homosexuality."
* The Social Principles affirmation that "all persons are entitled to have their human and civil rights ensured" would not be amended to be more specific. Voted down was this change: "The United Methodist Church calls upon its agencies, boards, commissions and educational institutions at all levels to insure human and civil rights of all persons, including employees (remember Joan Clark?), regardless of sexual orientation."
* The process of examing and ordaining ministers wouldn't be changed so as to specifically prohibit the ordination and appointment of self-avowed, practicing homosexuals. As if that were necessary, given the linkage of the Social Principles statement and the process for removing ministers! Still, UMC's rightwing "Good News" folks wanted more, and the defeat of this one greatly vexed 'em. Actually, "Good News" lost on several fronts. They couldn't stop church support for ERA, a woman's freedom in the matter of abortion, and boycotts of J.P. Stevens and Nestle. They couldn't stop UMC from calling on the United States to apologize to Iran for its history of intervention in that nation's affairs, including the CIA-engineered overthrow of Iran's popular Mossedegh government in 1953.

NEW YORK – In the wake of the 1980 General Conference, a UMC minister decided he'd try to rid the church of Paul Abels, pastor of Washington Square UMC in Greenwich Village. He wrote to New York Bishop W. Ralph Ward, accusing Abels of "immoral and un-Christian conduct," per the UMC Social Principles. Abels first publicly acknowledged his homosexuality in 1977, and it's been no secret since. The Conference's five-member Committee on Investigations found the literalistic use of Scripture in the accusation to be "inadequate" and said the charges lacked "reasonable grounds." So, Paul Abels will stay at the East Village church.

NASHVILLE – The United Methodist Board of Discipleship has ruled that sex seminars for adults are all right, but that explicit sex films may not be owned, possessed or used by Methodist churches. Irritant in the controversy were films produced by Methodist minister Dr. Ted McIlvenna's National Sex Forum, whose films the Board of Discipleship had previously said were useful in counseling. McIlvenna, working with a cast of 10 unpaid volunteer couples, has made 64 films distributed to 8,000 customers, including the Federal Government. McIlvenna is associated with Glide Memorial United Methodist Church and the Institute for the Advanced Study of Human Sexuality, both in San Francisco. He produces 16-mm films and video cassettes, and predicts that churches that like them will continue using them anyway. In Nashville, the Board of Discipleship reports its 10 McIlvenna-produced films are "under lock and key."

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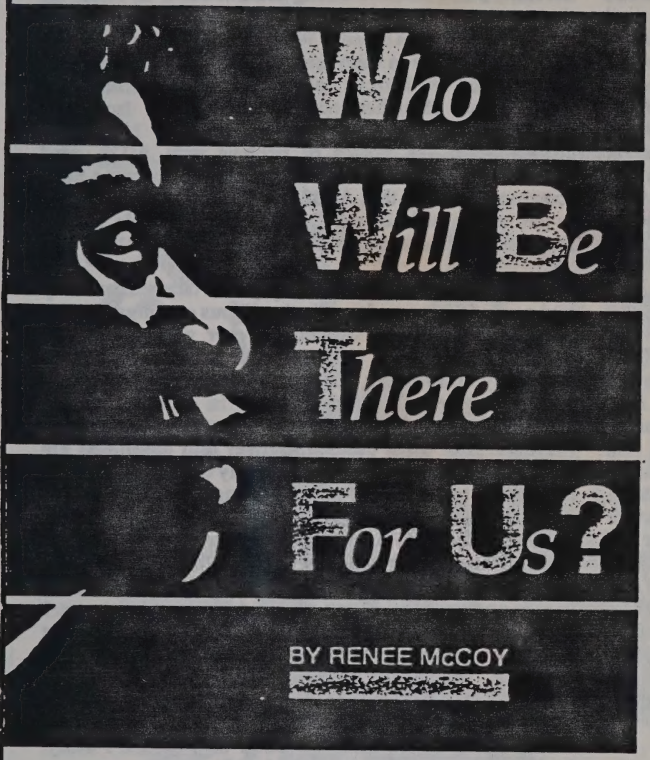


Who Will Be There For Us?

BY RENEE McCOY

Recently, Don, a friend and colleague of mine, and I were asked to train a group of students from a prestigious East Coast university in methods of facilitating workshops on racism, sexism, and homophobia. Delighted to do anything which might further the involvement of individuals in the destruction of these problems, Don and I excitedly accepted the task and made plans for a productive weekend. On probably the worst winter weekend of the season, we drove to meet the students at a farm in upstate New York, where we set about passing on our skills to a new generation of leaders and, hopefully, activists.

Twenty-four students took part in the weekend retreat. Thirteen of them were white; eleven were persons of color. Five were openly gay or lesbian. Don is an Asian gay man; I am a Black lesbian. Don considers himself an agnostic; I am a Christian minister. In spite of our differences, we are activists and good friends and both committed to the enlightenment and empowerment of all persons effected by oppression.

The weekend was inspiring and challenging from the start. The students were juniors and seniors with well developed skills in critical analyses and information processing. They had finely tuned, questioning, searching minds. Some were from affluent families, some were not; all were reaching for middle class dreams.

The weekend was intense for all of us. The students requested that we focus more on racism since ongoing workshops on campus dealt with homophobia and sexism. With this in mind, we reserved only the last three-hour block of time for dealing with homophobia. This was a mistake. The method we used requires a great deal of participation and critical looking at one's values. On the issue of homophobia, we discovered that silence had been wrongly interpreted as having dealt with the issue. The workshop was also designed to break through pre-established defenses and encourage participants to say what they really think and feel by creating a safe and trust-filled space. This time, however, when the silence was broken my heart was broken, shattered by the bitter truths of how the Black religious communities have participated in the continued oppression of gay men and lesbians.

There were six Black women in the group, one of whom was a lesbian. There were no Black men. Four of the five who were not lesbians proved to be the most homophobic of the entire group of twenty-four. They were also the most religious. The basis of their arguments against lesbianism and homosexuality was that sex between persons of the same sex was unnatural, immoral, and just plain wrong in the eyes of God. God said for humankind to replenish the earth and there was only one way to do that.

Although pressed for time, I hurriedly pointed out to them how the Bible has been used throughout the history of Blacks to oppress us. I spoke in that down-home faith language familiar to their tradition about the oneness of God's spirit and about God's unconditional love and acceptance. They continued to say, "It's unnatural." I talked about the Black church's commitment to human rights and about love being one of those rights. Still they replied, "It's unnatural." I spoke of the mandate of the Gospel that we work for justice and equality. "It's still unnatural," was the response. Desperate, I talked about how for generations slavery was considered "natural" for Black people. The cries continued, the voices unchanged.

The Black lesbian seated very close to me on the floor hung her head and said nothing. I smelled her fear. I felt the heat of her young soul melting and heard the sounds of chains fastening around her dreams, locked in place by Black hands. Voices screamed loudly in my head, "Woe to those who come out of the tomb and roll the stone back on

those left in the grave; their salvation shall be deemed highly questionable until the end of time!" Hallelujah!

These women, sadly, are reflective of too many Black Christians in this country. Although the Black church has been in the forefront of all progressive changes in civil rights since the days of slavery, it has not been consistent in regards to the human rights of gay men and lesbians. Rather, it has been silent or abusive. And either response has helped to further the oppression of lesbians and gay men. I firmly believe that the good health of the Black community depends upon its healthy response in support of the human rights of all peoples including lesbians and gay men. To do less is to allow the untreated wounds of our brokenness to decay and thus destroy the entire body.

To understand this, one has only to look at the places where brokenness lives in the Black lesbian and gay communities and ask, "Who is working at healing it, and who should be given the call of the Gospel and the oneness of the body of Christ?" Black gay men and lesbians face a dual experience of oppression. They encounter racism almost from birth, and homophobia from the moment they claim their sexualities. As they grow and move among the lesbian and gay communities seeking companionship and relationships, they risk encountering racism from within those very communities to which they have fled. Where do they go for pastoral counseling, for guidance in developing moral behavior and healthy relationships, for affirmation of their relationships, for comfort when relationships fail? Where do they go for help in diffusing the anger and hurt of the racism within the gay and lesbian communities? Who heals the broken painful wounds caused by familial rejection when their sexuality is discovered? Certainly not the Black religious community. Who should be involved in this healing and comforting based on the history of Black people and on the Gospel?

As I think back on that workshop and remember the attitudes expressed, as I look at other instances of brokenness that weaken the Black community, I continue to ask, "Who will be there for us?" Consider drug and alcohol abuse. These life-destroying abuses are allowed to flourish by an uncaring system, a system so insensitive to the needs of Black people that it blames those who are victimized. For many gay men and lesbians, drugs and alcohol are their only means of coping with the pressures of their lifestyles, the only way to numb the pain. Who walks among them witnessing to another way of hope? Who gives assurance of God's sustaining grace, a grace more soothing than any other substance known to humankind?

Consider the brokenness of AIDS, terrifying every segment of our society. By labeling AIDS a gay problem, the homophobia of the Black comunity makes all of us a people living at risk. Why are not Black religious leaders preaching vehemently throughout the land the whole truth about the disease? Why don't Sunday worshipers as they sit in their pews hear that 41% of all AIDS cases are people of color, or 59% of all children with AIDS are Black children, or 52% of all women with AIDS are Black women, or that of the men being inducted into the Armed Services, Black men are testing positive 4 to 1. To whom do these people turn to hold them and pray for them when they're on their deathbeds? Who preaches their funerals? Who will be there to wipe the sweat from their brow when they are too weak from coughing to lift an arm? How many Black churches send representatives from the nurse's guild, the deacon board, or the hospitality committee to the homes of persons with AIDS, gay/lesbian or not? How many Black religious persons have screamed, instead, that AIDS is a punishment from God to gay men and lesbians? Do these same people scream that sickle cell anemia is God's punishment to the Black race?

The issues Black lesbians and gay men face without help and needed support of the Black religous communities are many. The threat of violence is ever present. Quality health care is absent. Homelessness is increasing in the Black gay and lesbian communities, and they face both racial and sexual discrimination in existing shelter systems and housing programs. Discrimination in employment and child custody, hunger and loneliness are painful realities. Every lesbian or gay man engages in a continuing battle for self-esteem throughout her or his life. Who will set these captives free?

Nevertheless, we have survived, often in spite of the Black religious communities. I fear, however, that the credibility of these communities will not survive if their silence and rejection of gay men and lesbians continues. I fear that one day those who call themselves Christian but continue to participate in our oppression will look for God and God will be busy parting the Red Seas of our lives for our liberation. When it comes to lesbian and gay needs and issues, too many in the Black religious communities have opted to march in Pharoah's army. And, we all know what happened to Pharoah's army . . .

I often think about the women at that weekend training retreat. I pray that something shifted in their thinking or that they heard something that will at least cause them to question their hard opinions. I pray for them and for the rest of the Black religious communities. As I pray I yearn for us to somehow love one another through these times. Regardless, my faith in God's love for and acceptance of me and my lesbian sisters and gay brothers is unyielding. Each day that I live I know without a doubt "that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 8:38-39) □

Rene McCoy is a minister in the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches (MCC) and is founder and past passor of the Harlem MCC. She is currently working with homeless women in New York City.

David McLimans

Next Life, I'll Be White

NY TIMES 8/13/90

By Laurence Thomas

SYRACUSE

In my next life, I shall certainly aim to come back a white person — make that a white male.

You see, while white males have committed more evil cumulatively than any other class of people in the world, this fact is often lost on both them and others. The Crusades, American slavery and the two World Wars, including the Holocaust, should clinch this point.

When it comes to evil on a grand scale, black men do not hold a candle to white men. But notwithstanding this painfuly obvious — and, I should think, embarrassing — truth, not only do white males generally regard themselves as morally superior to all others; moreover, whites generally regard white males in this way.

My 40-year journey through life has revealed to me that more often than not, I need only to be in the presence of a white woman and she will begin clutching her pocketbook. My sheer presence has reminded more white people — female and male alike — to lock their car doors than I care to think about. I suppose it can be said here that I make an unwitting contribution to public safety.

I rarely enjoy what is properly called the public trust of whites. That is to say, the white person on the street who does not know me from Adam or Eve is much more likely to judge me negatively on account of my skin color, however much my attire and mannerisms (including gait) conform to the traditional standards of well-off white males.

And the absurdity of doing so is no barrier here. I was recently walking down a supermarket aisle with a hand-basket full of groceries, one in each hand. A white women saw me and rushed for her pocketbook, which she had left in her cart. I would have had to put my own groceries down in order to take her pocketbook.

No doubt she thought to herself: "He won't fool me with that old basket-in-each-hand trick." By contrast, I suspect that there are very few white males who, when traditionally attired and mannered, fail to enjoy the trust of other whites or anyone else for that matter.

If a 150-pound, well-groomed white man wearing a tweed jacket, tie and wool slacks were reading the bulletin board outside a university conference hall, I cannot imagine him being reported to the police as a suspicious character — let alone one requiring four police officers to attend to the matter, as happened to me at a Midwestern university. Four officers! What on earth was I reported as: — 10 feet tall in military garb? Or, "There is a black man . . ."?

Many of my well-placed black friends in the academy report similar mind-boggling stories. We could support a "Believe-It-Or-Not" column for years. Now if we, well-groomed and mannered blacks, do not enjoy the public trust, it is discomforting to think how less-well-off blacks fare.

If white people generally think white men are morally superior, given the moral track record of white men, it is simply unimaginable what white people would think if this unenviable record were held by the males of another ethnic group.

Maybe then I'll be trusted.

I have committed no crimes; and it seems rather unlikely that I shall turn to a criminal life in the future. No, I intend to go on living morally as best I can. But it sure would be nice to enjoy on a much more frequent basis one of the benefits that come with living morally — namely, the public trust. And this I would most certainly do if I were white.

Now, I can hear white people, especially white males, telling me that the truly moral person is indifferent to the public trust. Plato and Kant are among the great defenders of this claim.

I would not dream of thinking that I could show either of these great minds to be wrong. So let me just respond with the observation that the public trust that white men claim to be irrelevant is something that they have always enjoyed and take for granted. People generally do not appreciate the role of a good in their lives when they are able to take it for granted. Indeed, in such instances they often discount its significance.

Psychology is constantly telling us that being affirmed by others is indispensable to our flourishing. It would be stunning if psychology were right, but in general enjoying the public trust was irrelevant to humankind flourishing, Plato and Kant notwithstanding. As is the case so often with oppression, the victims are made to feel inadequate for insisting upon what their oppressors enjoy and routinely take for granted. □

Laurence Thomas is professor of philosophy at Syracuse University.

Now That Country Clubs Are Admitting Blacks . . .

By Norma G. Blumenfeld

GLEN COVE, N.Y.

When the host of the U.S. Open golf championship, Shoal Creek Country Club, in Birmingham, Ala., bowed to a threatened sponsor boycott and admitted its first black member, headlines exploded. It made me very happy. Maybe, just maybe, I hoped, before the news media lose interest, someone will notice that black golfers are not alone in experiencing discrimination at most clubs. I can't join them either.

Most country clubs are white clubs all right. White *male* clubs. They bar women from full golf membership. There are plenty of "ladies" at the club, of course, but the ladies are all wives and the gentlemen are the members. The women cannot vote. They have no equity interest in the club's valuable real estate. Women, including women who have full-time jobs during the week, are not permitted on the golf course on the weekends until all of the men have teed off.

Norma G. Blumenfeld is a lawyer.

. . . They should end their bias against women, too.

If her marriage ends by divorce, the woman is out, unless her former husband quits the club and agrees in writing to allow her to stay. A woman whose husband is not interested in joining a country club, a woman who does not want to ride her husband's coattails into the club, a woman who doesn't happen to have a husband cannot join the club at all.

I pore over each new article about discrimination at golf clubs, hoping someone will think to interview the "ladies" at the club. People might be interested to know that most country clubs restrict the use of their facilities by women in a manner so demeaning as to be almost comical.

Ordinarily women may not enter the "male grill room." The Mill River Country Club on Long Island allows women to eat in the main dining room, but they cannot sit in chairs that have arms. All armchairs are restricted for male use only. Surprisingly, this is the same club that The New York Times and National Public Radio singled out in the wake of the Shoal Creek controversy as a paragon of anti-bias virtue.

The club has a five percent minority membership. It is half Christian and half Jewish by design. But the club does not have any women members, no women sit on its board of governors and none can sit in the armchairs.

Morally reprehensible, yes. And yet, is this all that important? The Professional Golf Association thinks

so. It has proposed rules that would keep its tournaments off of courses that discriminate against women. And even Mill River is discussing the issue with wives at the club.

It is important because golf is a game where white businessmen are the winners. Businesses and professional partnerships regularly use these clubs to promote their interests.

Accounting firms, brokerage houses, insurance agencies and other business and professional groups underwrite country-club costs — initiation fees, dues and assessments — for partners and employees. The tax law recognizes membership costs as business-related and tax-deductible.

Yet a woman partner at an accounting firm, for example, that pays club costs for its partners so they can entertain clients and bring in business can't advance her career in this way because the club won't let her.

Ending biased admission practices is one necessary step in the slow process of removing long-standing barriers to the full participation of women, as well as minorities, in the business and professional community. □

NY Times, 8/29/90

Now That Country Clubs Are Admitting Blacks ...

NY Times 8/14/90 A15

ESSAY | William Safire

Unequal Justice

WASHINGTON

An American jury sent a stern message to the Attorney General the other day: The Government of the United States should never stoop to acting like a pimp.

By threatening to prosecute a former girlfriend of Marion Barry, our Justice Department coerced her into serving as a sexual lure. The Government then transported her across the country at taxpayer expense and had her telephone the target to initiate a meeting at her hotel; when he suggested the lobby, the voluptuous agent of the Attorney General lured the target up to her room, which was rigged with hidden cameras.

After denying him the sex he expected (the Government was not even an honest pimp), our entrapper coaxed him into using crack cocaine. Other agents then burst in and arrested him for committing the crime to which the Attorney General himself was accessory.

In a departure from American values, the Supreme Court has held that arranging such an entrapment with a suspect who can be shown to be "predisposed" to commit the crime may be permissible. Moreover, our Attorney General insists he had nothing to do with the decision to employ a sex lure to induce the target into performing a criminal act on television.

But when I asked him two months ago if the decision to set up the Mayor had come to him for review, the nation's chief law officer grudgingly admitted that he "knew about it beforehand" — as if not giving a direct order to do the dirty business absolved him of responsibility.

This low point in Federal law enforcement cannot be attributed to the popinjay prosecutor in charge of the D.C. case; by refusing to say "we don't stoop this low," the Attorney General gave the Bush Administration's approval to a precedent in electronic keyhole-peeking that shames the law.

Thank God for juries. A sufficient number of jurors found this trick repugnant enough to torpedo the case. It convicted him of one misdemeanor count of drug use, acquitted him of another, but refused to convict on the felony accusations. In effect, the jury said, "We know he's a drug user, but we won't stand for the way the Government went overboard."

The embarrassed prosecution explains: We had to get this man. He was the drug-ridden Mayor of a drug-ridden city. Because we could not allow a junkie to occupy a high place, we spent millions and stretched privacy standards to get him.

Provided he's not a political buddy. Readers may recall a charge in this space two months ago of a double standard in the investigation of officials suspected of drug use.

Henry Barr was, for 20 years, Dick Thornburgh's right-hand man. He came to Washington with his boss, and soon was the assistant overseeing criminal matters, with the highest security clearance. Last year, he quit suddenly — as Neil Lewis of The New York Times discovered, only two days after a longtime associate in Pennsylvania was named as target in a drug investigation.

Did Mr. Thornburgh authorize sleazy sex lures and costly sting operations to trap his aide, who was privy to the most secret drug busts? No. Did he recognize the conflict of interest and turn the matter over to independent counsel? No.

The Attorney General and an array of top aides at Justice recused themselves. Mr. Thornburgh was deliberately so out of it that — until he heard

Thank God for juries.

it in a question from me — he did not know that even the head of his Criminal Division had ducked out of the case.

He resisted calls for a special prosecutor. Finally, 16 months after Mr. Barr quit, Senator Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania — who knows something about Harrisburg politics and the law's delays — called for an independent counsel. So did the defendant's lawyer, now worried about catch-up zeal.

Judiciary Committee members swing more weight at Justice than columnists. Thus prodded, only 11 days later a grand jury indicted Henry Barr for cocaine use. It was the same day that a petit jury gave Marion Barry his victory over sleazealotry.

What's the point of this juxtaposition? Not race; no plot exists to get black officials and let whites go. Nor may we compare Mr. Barry's admitted guilt to Mr. Barr's protested innocence.

When evidence points at high-level officials, a single standard should apply: If the suspect is a political opponent, the Attorney General should authorize a respectable level of investigative diligence, and if the suspect is a buddy, he should speedily assign independent counsel. □

Don't Celebrate 1492 — Mourn It

By Hans Koning

NEW HAVEN, Conn.

Throughout the country, groups are organizing counter-celebrations of the quincentennial of the year 1492. They are preparing to counteract the official celebrations of the 500th anniversary of Columbus's landing in the Americas. A New York group, tentatively called Columbus In Context, had its first meeting last month. This is our opening statement:

We are not spoilsports. We are not out to spoil innocent fun, happy parading, dressing up in old costumes and selling Santa Maria souvenirs.

However, the fun is not innocent. "You are spoiling the pleasure of our children," a woman said to an American Indian who was demonstrating outside a 1992 exhibition already circulating in the Southeast. That exhibition is called "First Encounters."

The miserable truth is that those first encounters on the Indian side quickly led to last encounters. The Indians of the Caribbean were destroyed within two generations by the Spanish discoverers. Not one of them was converted to the Catholic faith, which was supposedly a prime motive of those voyages. They died when they were hanged, in rows of 13, "in honor of the Redeemer and His twelve Apostles," according to the original Spanish documents.

They had their hands cut off when they did not bring in their quarterly quota of gold dust. Their chiefs were roasted on fires of green wood. When their cries kept the Spaniards awake, they were silenced with wooden slats put over their tongues. Ten years after the first landing, the miserable native survivors started killing themselves by eating poisoned roots.

Yes, Christopher Columbus was the first European to sail to America in recorded history. But Columbus set into motion a sequence of greed, cruelty, slavery and genocide that, even in the bloody history of mankind, has few parallels. He organized an extermination of native Americans. He was also as mean, cruel and greedy in small matters as he was in vast ones.

I am not giving any radical opinions here. These aren't new facts. You can find them substantiated in the logs of Columbus's son, in the writing of Bartolomé de las Casas, a Spanish bishop and historian of the time, and in plenty of other period documents.

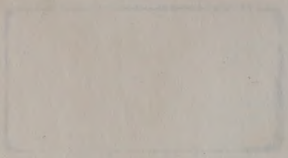
It may seem a pity to let go of dear national lore. But we can no longer in good faith celebrate this man and this occasion. We must look at our own past with open eyes.

We must end the phony baloney about the white man bringing Christianity, and about Columbus the noble son of the humble weaver. Our false heroes and a false sense of the meaning of courage and manliness have too long burdened our national spirit.

We must set out for a new harmony of races, for an atonement of past crimes. In that way, we have a truly New World to discover. □

Hans Koning is a novelist and essayist.

NY TIMES 8/14/90



I Am Not an Anti-Semite

By Spike Lee

Because of Moe and Josh Flatbush, the mislabeled "villainous" owners of the jazz club in "Mo' Better Blues" who occupy less than 10 minutes of screen time in the film, some critics are suggesting that I am engaging in anti-Semitism. One even insinuated that in my relatively small body of work there is some pattern of bigoted representation of Jewish people.

This is simply not true.

I'm not a racist; I'm not a bigot; I am not an anti-Semite. What I try to do with all my characters is offer what I feel are honest portraits of individuals with both faults and endearing characteristics. I have criticized stereotypical images in other films, and I don't deny others the right to voice such concerns about my work.

But for any artist, it would be emasculating to let others dictate his or her work. I will not accept this straitjacket from any group of critics. There are black people and black critics who find my black characters to be negative portrayals of the entire race. In fact, I get more heat from black people about my depictions of blacks than I get from whites.

There is a double standard at work in the accusations of anti-Semitism. I challenge anyone to tell me why I can't portray two club owners who happen to be Jewish and who exploit the black jazz musicians who work for them. All Jewish club owners are not like this, that's true, but these two are.

Not every black person is a pimp, murderer, prostitute, convict, rapist or drug addict, but that hasn't stopped Hollywood from writing these roles for African-Americans. Negative images of black people are presented on film and television every day and there is no great uproar. It's sad, but most film critics don't even recognize these images when they come across them. They surely don't write about it.

Just for the sake of argument, let's say that Moe and Josh Flatbush are stereotypes. Let's compare their 10 minutes of screen time with 100 years of Hollywood cinema. Let's get real. There's hypocrisy. I've gotten more press for being a "racist" and an "anti-Semitic" filmmaker for the 10 minutes of Moe and Josh than a slew of really racist, anti-Semitic filmmakers.

The majority of film reviewers don't accuse me of bigotry. But of those who do, have any ever written in-depth studies of Hollywood's racism? Do they write long, critical articles every year about the art house and film festival revivals of "Birth of a Nation," that so-called American classic by D.W. Griffith, the "father" of Hollywood cinema, which was used as a recruiting tool by the Ku Klux Klan? Black men were lynched because of that film.

Has anyone written about the racist images in Walt Disney films like "Song of the South" and "Dumbo"? These critics probably grew up watching Disney movies and have internalized those images of shuffling, hankerchief head "Negroes" so much that it probably never occurred to them that a lot of Disney's images were offensive to black people. Where were the articles when Disney re-released "Jungle Book" this summer? Not a word, not a peep. Again, the double standard.

> Suddenly, as blacks rise in film, stereotypes are an issue.

I get asked questions by the white press that no other film director comes up against. When "Do The Right Thing" was released, it was, "Spike, when are you gonna have some white characters in your films?" (At the time, I had only made two.) How many of these journalists have asked white directors (who have made many more films than I have) why they don't have any people of color in their films? Journalists ask me, "Spike, why aren't there any drugs in your films?" — as if African-Americans are the only people on earth who use drugs and African-American filmmakers are somehow the only filmmakers beholden to tackle that issue in their work.

Of all the journalists who peered into their crystal balls and predicted riots upon the release of "Do The Right Thing" last summer, not a single one has had the guts, honesty or integrity to admit their disservice to the film. Millions of white Americans stayed away from the theater for fear of violence, which never materialized, and waited to see the film on videotape in the comfort and safety of their own living rooms.

Even more importantly, these nervous journalists exposed their total ignorance about, and disrespect for, 30 million African Americans. If you want racism, that's it. Again, the double standard. What high moral ground are my critics writing from?

If we're gonna play the game of "let's nail Spike," let's make sure everybody plays by the same rules. Don't hold me to a higher moral standard than the rest of my filmmaking colleagues. Now that young black filmmakers have arisen in the film industry, all of a sudden stereotypes are a big issue. Why does this issue matter so much today? The minute black people begin to use their little power, their little influence and their little visibility, then it becomes a problem.

There is not a filmmaker in America working today whose films are scrutinized like mine. Film critics, journalists, social scientists, politicians pore over every single word, every single image, every single frame of my films with high powered microscopes.

I am not complaining about the dissection; but do that to everyone else, too. Am I the only filmmaker who warrants such intense inspection? I hope not. And, I think it's reaching the point where *I'm* getting reviewed, not my films.

I'm an artist and I stand behind all my work, including my characters, Moe and Josh Flatbush. As of now, this matter is closed for me. This week, I started shooting my next film, "Jungle Fever." It will be released next summer, and no doubt, once again, I'll have to defend myself against even mo' slings and mo' arrows.

In closing, if critics are telling me that to avoid charges of anti-Semitism, all Jewish characters I write have to be model citizens, and not one can be a villain, cheat or a crook, and that no Jewish people have ever exploited black artists in the history of the entertainment industry, that's unrealistic and unfair. □

Spike Lee is director of the film "Mo' Better Blues."

NY Times 8/22/90

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Reuters

Maria da Graça Meneghel, center, called Xuxa, and her backup singers. Xuxa, the host of a children's television show, is Brazil's most successful performing artist.

Brazil's Idol Is a Blonde, and Some Ask 'Why?'

By JAMES BROOKE

Special to The New York Times

RIO DE JANEIRO, July 30 — When Rosane Collor, the wife of Brazil's President, wanted to collect food for children's nurseries in Rio, she turned to Xuxa.

Maria da Graça Meneghel, a children's television host who goes by the stage name Xuxa (pronounced SHOO-shuh), agreed to help. Turning the opening night of her latest movie into a benefit, she declared that admission would be several pounds of nonperishable food.

At the end of the gala here last month, weary volunteers declared that had they collected 69 tons in aid.

Once bowled over by Carmen Miranda, Brazil is now entranced by a rosy-cheeked 27-year-old singer with flaxen hair and blue eyes. Her performing retinue features the Paquitas, seven girls with golden tresses.

The Fruits of Success

A descendant of Italian, Polish and German immigrants, Xuxa has become the nation's most successful performing artist. At last count, her four records had sold 12 million copies. Her eight movies have done equally well, with the last one, "Princess Xuxa," selling four million tickets. Her comic book is now Brazil's best-selling one, with 400,000 copies printed daily. Children (and their parents) are bombarded by more than 40 Xuxa-endorsed products.

Politicians court her. Last year, presidential candidates sought unsuccessfully to win her endorsement. José Sarney, the President at the time, presented her with a medal honoring her work against polio.

This year, with an eye to Xuxa's morning audience of tens of millions of children and adults, Alceni Guerra, Brazil's Health Minister, visited the star at her home here to win support for campaigns against drugs, smoking and meningitis.

Having conquered Portuguese-speaking Brazil, Xuxa is studying Spanish to extend her entertainment empire to the rest of Latin America. Recent appearances in Los Angeles, Miami, Mexico City and Viña del Mar, Chile, helped push sales for her record "Xuxa en Español" to more than 300,000 copies.

'Profoundly Racist' Culture

"When I go to an airport and am not mobbed by children, I get worried," the entertainer said during a break in taping at her studio here.

But in a land largely populated by people of African, Indian and Latin stock, some chafe at the idea that Brazil's idol looks as if she just stepped off a jet from Frankfurt.

"You have a nation that is half brown or black, and the national symbol is blond," said Herbert de Souza, a sociologist here. "Our culture is profoundly racist."

> Xuxa, a TV host, is so popular her endorsement is sought by politicians.

Abdias do Nascimento, a leader in the United Black Movement here, said: "It's very negative for children. It makes people despise themselves because they don't have the same model of beauty. You have little black girls who only want blond dolls."

Indeed, the blond image that Xuxa projects runs counter to racial trends here.

Last month, a survey of Brazil's racial composition indicated that "browns and blacks" made up 43 percent of the population of 140 million.

Positive Roles for Asians

Demographers who studied the survey, prepared by the Brazilian Institute for Geography and Statistics, forecast that by the turn of the century Brazil would return to its historic makeup of a black and brown majority. A century of European and Asian immigration, which ended in the 1960's, put blacks and browns in the minority.

Some say the Xuxa phenomenon is part of a preference for racial stereotypes often associated in this third-world nation with first-world success.

The race survey found that Brazilians of Asian origin had the highest incomes of all racial groups in the nation. With the rise of the million-strong Japanese-Brazilian minority here, Asian faces have started appearing in positive roles in advertisements here.

"Before they only wanted Japanese for the roles of laundryman, cookie maker or Buddhist monk," said Luís Nobuki Morisawa, who recently opened an agency in São Paulo specializing in Asian models. "Today the face of an Oriental on TV is synonymous with competence, seriousness and the future."

'Children's Choice'

Xuxa says her all-blond cast responds to the "children's choice."

"Children like Snow White, Cinderella, Barbie," she said. "When they see me close to them, it's as if the mythical person has become reality."

On the rare occasion that the race issue is raised, Xuxa's defenders note that she first achieved prominence in the early 1980's when she dated Pelé, the soccer player who is Brazil's most prominent

Continued on Page B2

A New Goal for an Impersonator: To Portray Still Others, but Onstage

Six

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for the human exploration of
as been hotly debated. Mars
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and who will do it.

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l prestige, sustaining aero-
capability in a more peaceful
and so forth. But perhaps the
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to pioneer, to explore, to reach
ceed new frontiers." Surely
s and should be in our destiny.

GET THE
CROSSWORD
ANSWER
THAT'LL HELP
J GET THROUGH
DAY'S PUZZLE.
JUST CALL
00-884-CLUE.
swers for up to three clues.
a touch-tone telephone only.
for the first minute,
for each additional minute.
New York Times

who was then the dean of the Columbia School of Journalism, and his wife, Inger.

'You Get Paranoid'

"In a way, I was happy that the game was over," Mr. Hampton said of his arrest on Oct. 18, 1983, at the age of 19. "It gets tiring after a while. You get paranoid." Mr. Hampton was arraigned on charges of petty larceny, criminal impersonation and fraudulent accosting. He pleaded guilty to a lesser charge of attempted burglary.

When his parents learned of his activities "they were mortified," he said. "They thought I was pursuing an acting and dancing career," he said. "Both my parents were the first in their families to go to college. My father is a lawyer and my mother was a nurse who went back and got a degree in communications. They were always headstrong and conservative people. I wanted a career in the arts, but they wanted me to be a doctor, lawyer or stockbroker. But I felt those 9-to-5 types of things were too easy."

After he served his prison sentence, he said, he moved back to Buffalo. He said he did menial work at the Langston Hughes Institute there for almost a year. He then went to London, where he said he lived for two and a half years working off the books as a waiter and bartender in various places and traveling through Europe. Tired of getting paid "like an illegal alien," he said, he returned to the United States early last year, settling in West Hollywood, Calif., where he got a job delivering groceries. He said he then moved to Venice, Calif., where he painted houses and started

fend the public.

"I think we cannot look strictly at artistic excellence in a vacuum," he told the commission, "but we have to look at it as how it's going to play with the audience that we're charged with serving — which is the people."

Not 'Some Sort of Sacrilege'

Defending his right to overrule peer panel recommendations, he said in a statement before being questioned, "It should not be considered some sort of sacrilege when either the chair or the National Council differs with a panel." The National Council on the Arts is a 23-member, Presidentially appointed body that advises the chairman.

When asked by John T. Agresto, the president of St. John's College in Santa Fe, N.M., who served as deputy chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities under William Bennett from 1985 to 1989, whether he thought public financing should not be used to support "ideologically driven or racist art," Mr. Frohnmayer replied:

"I think it's real difficult to make a sweeping statement of principle like that. I don't think anybody's for racism, or for promoting it, but one of the real strengths of this country is the breadth that the First Amendment gives us. I simply believe that individual judgment is preferable to written standards."

Mr. Frohnmayer also told the commission that he did not believe there should be a difference in standards for public and private support of the arts.

The 12-member independent commission, which was created by Con-

Last week the House and the Senate postponed until September their floor debates on the future of the endowment. With this delay, attention is now focused on the independent commission appointed by President Bush to examine the endowment's standards and procedures. The commission is expected to complete a report in time for the next Congressional vote. If no sweeping changes are recommended, members of Congress may find it easier politically to vote for keeping the endowment substantially intact.

Ideologically broad, the commission has as its co-chairmen John Brademas, the president of New York University, who served in the House as a Democrat from Indiana from 1959 to 1981, and Leonard Garment, a Washington lawyer who was a special consultant to President Nixon from 1969 to 1974.

Since its first meeting on June 6, the commission has questioned officials of the endowment, arts professionals who have served as members of the endowment's grant-making peer panels and officials of various Federal agencies that use peer panels to make grants and others.

After today's questioning of Mr. Frohnmayer and other experts in the field, the commission will take testimony tomorrow from a group of constitutional law scholars concerned with freedom of expression.

Brazil's Idol Is Blond; Why?

Continued From Page B1

black citizen.

Others speculate that Brazil's infatuation with Xuxa merely reflects a universal premium — rarity.

Oba Oba is a Rio night club that features samba dancers of the Afro-Latin type that foreigners traditionally associate with Brazilian beauty.

"In January alone, I lost three dancers to marriages with Europeans, largely Germans," Elias Abifadel, the club's manager, said in a recent interview.

Competition on TV

This summer, the winner of the annual "Girl From Ipanema" contest was Carla Henker, a 20-year-old dentistry student. The daughter of German immigrants, Miss Henker was glowingly described in Rio's press as "extremely blond with blue eyes."

To compete with Xuxa's wildly successful program, on the Globo network, a rival network, Manchet, recently launched Angélica Ksyvickis as host of a children's program. Promotional photographs invariably stress her enormous head of blond hair.

But Angelica's competition is tough. During a 39-city tour of Brazil last year, an estimated two million children and their parents paid to see Xuxa perform live.

When the show came to Salvador, often called the capital of black Brazil for its majority Afro-Brazilian population, 10 children were hurt in a mad scramble to get closer to Xuxa.

Donation Pledged To Wave Hill

An anonymous donor has pledged $150,000 to Wave Hill, the park and cultural center in the Riverdale section of the Bronx, to help restore its concerts, dance series and art exhibitions, Wave Hill officials said yesterday.

Less than two weeks ago, the center announced that it would eliminate its arts programs because of a $155,000 deficit stemming from a sharp decline in support from corporations, foundations and other private sources.

A dance and multimedia performance last Saturday by Joan Jonas was to have been Wave Hill's last performing-arts program, and a photographic exhibition next spring was to be its final visual-arts project.

The 28-acre former estate, which includes gardens, forests and rolling lawns overlooking the Hudson River, has been open to the public since 1964 and has presented performances and art exhibitions since 1977.

DYNAMICS OF OPPRESSION
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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Attitudinal Racism: any concept which views other people as inferior on the basis of race; any attitude of supremacy.

Behavioral Racism: any action or behavior which has the practical effect of disadvantaging people of color to the advantage of whites.

While an individual may not hold racist attitudes, to the extent that individual participates or condones actions which have the practical effect of disadvantaging people of color, the individual is a behavioral racist.

Discrimination: comes about only when we deny to individuals or groups of people equality of treatment which they may wish.

Discrimination includes any conduct based on a distinction made on groups of natural or social categories which have no relation either to individual capacities or merits or to the concrete behavior of the individual person.

Individual Racism: consists of an overt, discernible act against people of another race.

Institutional Racism (Covert Racism): placing or keeping persons in a position or status of inferiority by means of attitudes, actions, or institutional structures which do not use color itself as the subordinating mechanism, but use other mechanisms indirectly related to color.

An Institutional Structure: any well established habitual or widely accepted pattern of action or organizational arrangements whether formal or informal.

Overt Racism: the use of color *per se* as a subordinating factor.

Prejudice: a feeling, favorable or unfavorable, toward a person or thing, prior to or not based on actual experience. Feeling ill toward others without sufficient judgement.

Racism: any attitude, action or institutional structure which subordinates a person or a group because of the individual's or group's color.

Stereotype: A conventional, formulaic, and usually oversimplified conception, opinion or belief. A person, group, event, or issue considered to typify or conform to an unvarying pattern or manner, lacking any individuality.

A CONTEMPORARY GLOSSARY
DEFINITIONS OF RACISM

from Racism/Sexism Resource Center for Educations
1841 Broadway (60th Street), New York, NY 10023

PREJUDICE

"Unfavorable opinion or feeling formed beforehand without knowledge, thought of reason" -- from Random House Dictionary, 1967.

RACISM

"Any attitude, action or institutional structure which subordinates a person or group because of their color...Racism is not just a matter of attitudes: actions and institutional structures can also be a form of racism." -- from Racism in America and How to Combat It, U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1970.

"Racism is different from racial prejudice, hatred, or discrimination. Racism involves having the power to carry out systematic discriminatory practices through the major institutions of our society" -- from What Curriculum Leaders Can Do About Racism, Dr. Delmo Della-Dora, New Detroit, Inc. 1970.

WHITE RACISM

"Power + Prejudice = Racism." -- from Developing New Perspectives on Race, Pat A. Bidol.

"In the United States at present, only whites can be racists, since whites dominate and control the institutions that create and enforce American cultural norms and values...blacks and other Third World peoples do not have access to the power to enforce any prejudices they may have, so they cannot, by definition be racists." -- from Education & Racism, National Education Association, 1973.

"Racism and white racism mean the same thing, if we are referring to practices of major institutions and dominant societal patterns in the United States today...White people are in the majority in the country...Thus, government, business, industry, unions, churches, education and other institutions are almost always dominated by white people. When you combine power with racial discrimination, the result is racism". -- from What Curriculum Leaders Can Do About Racism.

INSTITUTIONS

"Are fairly stable social arrangements and practices through which collective actions are taken." (Examples of institutions are government, business, unions, schools, churches, courts and police.)

INSTITUTIONAL RACISM

"Institutions have great power to reward and penalize. They reward by providing career opportunities for some people and foreclosing them for others. They reward as well by the way social goods are distributed--by deciding who receives training and skills, medical care, formal education, political influence, moral support and self-respect, productive employment, fair treatment by law, decent housing, self-confidence and the promise of a secure future for self and children."

"One of the clearest indicators of institutional racism is the exclusion of black members of society from positions of control and leadership." -- from Institutional Racism in America, Knowles & Prewitt, Prentice-Hall, 1969.

"Some of the most conspicuous examples of (institutional racism) are in housing patterns; segregated schools; discriminatory employment and promotion policies; segregated churches; white control of newspapers, radio and TV; routes selected for construction of expressways or freeways; and textbooks which ignore or distort the role of black people." -- from What Curriculum Leaders Can Do About Racism

INDIVIDUAL VS. INSTITUTIONAL RACISM

"Racism is both overt and covert. It takes two, closely related forms: individual whites acting against individual blacks, and acts by the total white community against the black community. We call these individual racism and institutional racism. The first consists of overt acts by individuals, which cause death, injury or the violent destruction of property. This type can be recorded by television cameras; it can frequently be observed in the process of commission. The second type is less overt, far more subtle, less identifiable in terms of specific individuals committing the acts. But it is no less destructive of human life. The second type originates in the operation of established and respected forces in the society, and thus receives far less public condemnation than the first.

When white terrorists bomb a black church and kill five black children, that is an act of individual racism, widely deplored by most segments of society. But, when in that same city-Birmingham, Alabama-five hundred black babies die each year because of the lack of proper food, clothing, shelter and proper medical facilities and thousands more are destroyed or maimed physically, emotionally, and intellectually because of conditions of poverty and discrimination in the black community, that is a function of institutional racism." -- from Black Power, by S. Carmichael & C. Hamilton, Vintage, 1967.

Metropolitan Community Church
of the Resurrection
1909 Decatur Street
Houston, TX 77007-7698
(713) 861-9149